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SUBJECT: UNGA DISCUSSES UNSC REPORT: MEMBER STATES CONTINUE TO CALL FOR MORE ANALYSIS

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The General assembly met on November 12 - 13 for a joint plenary debate on the annual Report of the Security Council (SC) as well as Security Council expansion (septel). The United States and more than 70 delegations delivered statements, with some noting improvements in the report, but many more calling for more analysis and qualitative information. The U.S. statement delivered by Ambassador Wolff called the report transparent and comprehensive, and took note of the Council's efforts to hold more formal meetings which provide an excellent way for non-Council members to follow the Council's work first-hand without relying primarily on an annual report. Many states noted the current report was little more than a list of meetings held and actions taken, and expressed their desire for a more analytical report that would explain the reasons behind the Council's decision-making, as well as its lack of agreement on key issues. A number of countries, usually within the framework of offering some additional suggestion or improvement, noted that the report had improved in substance and even transparency over previous years. Some delegations called for more frequent reporting on the Security Council's work, either periodically or thematically. As in the past, many member states continued to call for greater participation and transparency; however, their representation at open meetings of the SC - as pointed out in the U.S. statement - has not reflected a comparable level of interest. Some countries called on the UN to reform its working methods in such a way as to enhance transparency and accountability. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) PGA CALLS FOR MORE ANALYSIS: President of the General Assembly (PGA) Ali Treki introduced the joint plenary debate and stated that discussion continued to strengthen the cooperation between the Assembly and the Security Council. Treki noted that it was a provision of the Charter for the Security Council to provide an annual report but that there is a widely shared view among member states that the Assembly's consideration of the report would be more meaningful if the report were substantive and "more analytical in terms of providing (a) better understanding of the dynamics of discussion and decision making in the Council." He noted that the report outlined the wide range of issues on the Council's agenda and, given the crucial nature of its work, scrutiny of its performance was intense.

¶3. (U) PSC NOTES GREATER TRANSPARENCY, URGES DELEGATES NOT TO UNDERESTIMATE REPORT'S VALUE: President of the Security Council (PSC) for the month of November, Austrian Perm Rep Thomas Mayr-Harting, presented the Council's annual report to the General Assembly noting that the Council had faced a challenging and complex set of situations and issues throughout the year. Mayr-Harting listed the countries, regions and issues that the Security Council dealt with in its meetings. He noted the increase in open debates and open briefings from previous years. The President recognized that "there will always be scope to improve further the analytical

depth" of the report, but urged delegations to "remind ourselves that the annual report in its entirety constitutes an important reference document for our work in the medium and long term. This should not be underestimated."

¶4. (U) U.S. STATEMENT NOTES EFFORTS TO CREATE A TRANSPARENT SECURITY COUNCIL: Ambassador Wolff delivered the U.S. statement and noted that the SC report "provides non-Council members with a transparent and comprehensive review of the intensive work of the Security Council." He added that "the United States takes seriously the importance of making sure that all member states are informed of and appropriately involved in the Council's work." He underscored that, in the spirit of transparency, the Security Council has held "more formal meeting of the Council which are open to the full membership, as the report highlights." He noted that "regrettably, however, these meetings are not always attended by more than a small percentage of member states" and urged member states to "follow the Council's work first hand on such occasions rather than relying primarily on an annual report." Full text of the statement can be found at: http://usun.state.gov/briefing/statements/200_9/131936.htm

¶5. (U) DELEGATIONS DEMAND ANALYSIS AND SUBSTANCE: Egypt, speaking on behalf of the Non-aligned Movement, expressed regret that the SC annual report lacked depth and was therefore less useful to the broader membership of the UN, and called specifically for the inclusion of further details on the Council's efforts made to maintain global peace and security. Belarus called the report informative, but said it lacked analytical depth. Algeria complained that the SC report did not explain cases where the Council was unable to reach a decision on an issue. (Comment: The Algerian

representative failed to appreciate how difficult it would be for the 15 members of the Security Council to ever reach consensus on a text discussing the source of their disagreement or reason for inaction. This was a common failure of most of the comments calling for greater analytical depth. End comment.) Cuba and Peru both called the report a mere description or listing of what the Security Council has done, and called for more substance to be included in the future. The Cuban representative even called for a separate plenary debate next year to only discuss the SC report and not to have a joint debate also covering SC reform since he said there was too much to cover on each topic. Tunisia said that the report is a compendium of decisions and resolutions and therefore takes away from the only chance for in-depth study of the Council's activity by non-members. Lichtenstein called the Security Council report central to the communications between the Security Council and the General Assembly and added that the report does not fulfill the goal of accountability in its current form and offered his country's support, working with other delegations and SC members, to exchange views on how to best improve the document. (Comment: The Charter does not/not state that the Council is accountable to the General Assembly, only that the Security Council should submit annual, and when necessary, special reports to the General Assembly for its consideration. End Comment.)

¶6. (U) SOME IMPROVEMENTS NOTED, MOSTLY BY CURRENT OR FORMER SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS: SC permanent member Russia defended the report as reflecting the dynamics of the SC's work and fulfilling its purpose, which is to give an accurate account of its actions over the previous year, but also noted that it is "well aware of the difficulties of discussing the report in the GA" and called for "greater interaction between the GA and the SC." Former SC member (2007-2009) Indonesia praised the Security Council for compiling a more analytical report, but noted there is room for improvement, and suggested that a discussion of its implementation efforts would be helpful. Current SC member Japan welcomed the report and offered to work towards improving its quality, noting that it is "long overdue." Pakistan referred to the report as a comprehensive compendium of decisions and meetings that has reference value, but noted that analysis is needed in order to

strengthen it, and also contended that more information on its decision making process (much of it occurring behind closed-doors) would be helpful in boosting its transparency. Current SC member Mexico noted that more transparency and analysis can be seen in this year's report, but urged delegations to continue fine-tuning the document. Current SC member Vietnam noted an improvement in the format and content of the SC report, but said more could always be done in order to better grasp the SC's role. The Congo noted it is grateful for the report, but said the purely factual approach limits the understanding of the challenges facing the SC. Paraguay called the report substantive.

¶7. (U) IMPROVEMENT: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?: The Swiss representative noted a lack of "highlighting the linkages between thematic, regional and country-specific issues" and also cited summaries as "often incomplete" and not accurately reflecting the discussions. He went on to suggest that the report include analytical summaries by each of the 12 monthly Council Presidents and considered adding a "lessons learned" chapter. SC permanent member the United Kingdom stressed its support for ensuring that the Security Council report be as transparent as possible and commended Vietnam and Uganda's efforts to convene an informal meeting to discuss the report and added that "we hope that more Member States will take advantage of such opportunities in the future." Belarus suggested that one way to improve communications between the Security Council and the General Assembly would be to shift towards monthly reports prepared by a member of the Security Council. (Note: Each Security Council President prepares a monthly assessment of the work of the Council which is posted on the Council's website and is used to prepare the Council's annual report. End note.) Numerous countries called for the General Assembly to improve upon its own working methods. Egypt noted that "reform of the working methods of the Security Council is also an important aspect of the council's reform. It should be based on enhancing transparency and accountability."

¶8. (U) REPORT NOTES A BUSY AND CHALLENGING TIME FOR THE SECURITY COUNCIL: Several delegations cited the report as evidence of the challenges faced by the Security Council in recent years. Current SC member Mexico commented that the "Security Council agenda has been very substantial, as seen in this report." Tunisia said that the report shows the great amount of work done by the Council over the last year and

stated that it had acted with determination in examining many conflicts. The Republic of Korea said it was grateful for the hard work in compiling the report, noting that it shows that the Council dealt with multi-faceted issues throughout the world.

Wolff